

Rabies Management in Montana



What is different about bats regarding rabies?

Most bats submitted for rabies testing are not rabid. However, 80% of human rabies cases acquired in the U.S. are associated with bats.

Bat-Acquired Human Rabies (1990-2007)

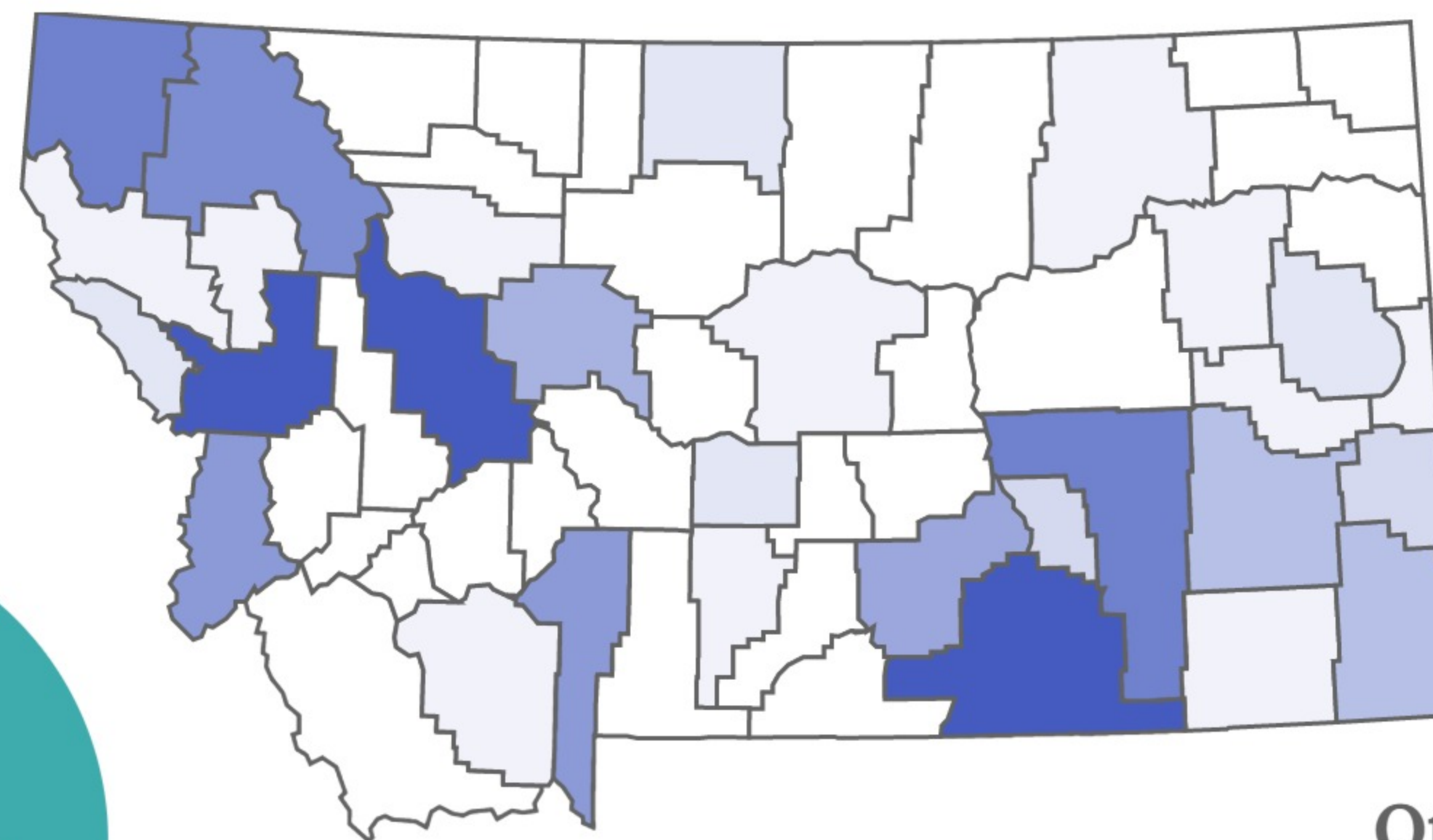
23% Percentage of human rabies cases that reported a bite from a bat.

Percentage of human rabies cases that reported physical contact with a bat, but no bite. **44%**

32% Percentage of human rabies cases who were unaware of any bat exposures.

Bat and skunk variants of the rabies virus are found in our state. The Rockies divide Montana's animal rabies distribution.

Animal Rabies in Montana 2009-2016



Number of animals positive for rabies
0 5 10 15

West of the Continental Divide

Bats are the most common animal to test positive for rabies.

East of the Continental Divide

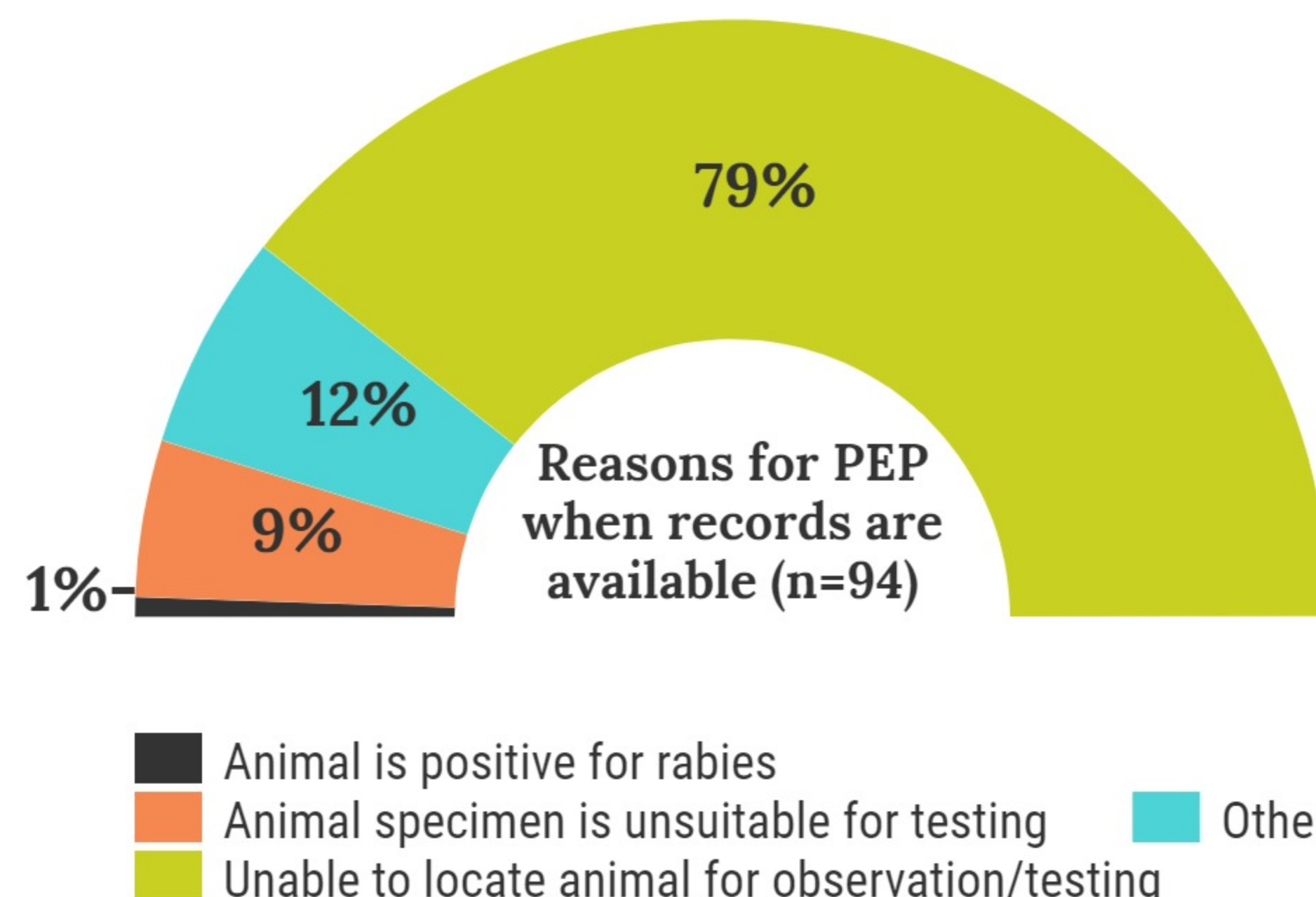
Skunks are the primary vectors of rabies.



Other animals that have tested positive from 2009-2016 for rabies are dogs, cattle, horses, and a cat.

Human rabies is 100% preventable with prompt intervention.

Reasons for Rabies Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) Recommendations-MT 2016



After a potential rabies exposure:

1. Cleanse the wound.

Prompt wound cleansing with soap and water reduces the risk of contracting rabies, and also helps prevent bacterial infection.

2. Seek care or call public health.

Rabies PEP is a medical urgency, not an emergency. Some wounds require medical attention. Providers are required to contact public health for follow up. Individuals can also contact public health for follow up when care is not sought.

3. Wait for a recommendation from public health before PEP administration.

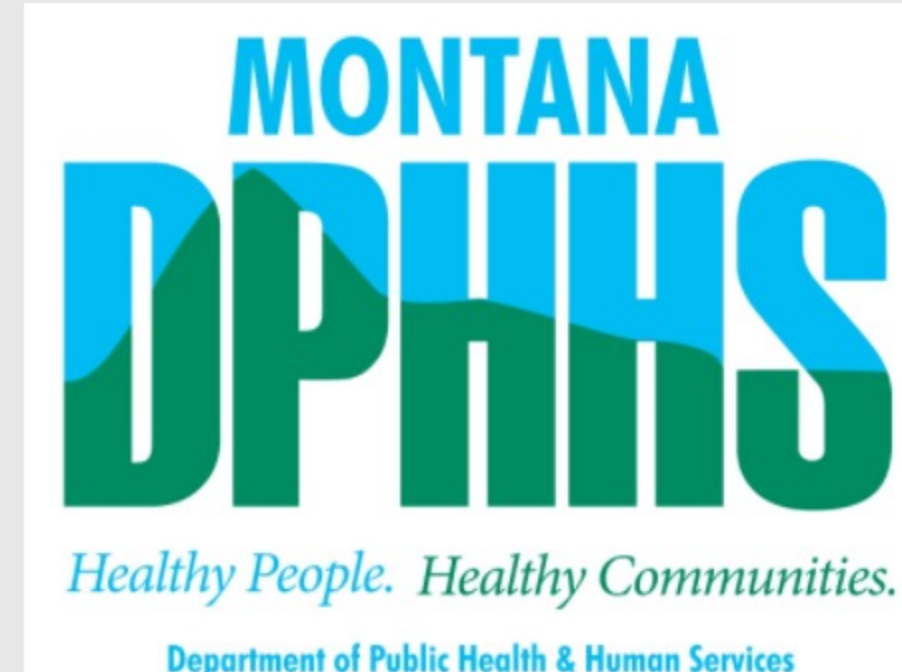
The local public health jurisdiction will attempt to follow up on the animal that exposed the patient. Based on information gathered during the rabies investigation, a rabies PEP recommendation will be made.

NOT EVERY BITE IS AN EXPOSURE, AND NOT EVERY EXPOSURE IS A BITE.

Potential exposures to rabies could include:

- Bites from mammals capable of carrying rabies
- Unprotected contact with infectious tissues of rabid animals
- Sleeping with bats in the room

Public health staff are trained to identify potential exposures to rabies, and when rabies PEP is necessary. Allowing public health to perform the follow up can save patients time, expense, and headaches!



CONTACT YOUR CARE PROVIDER OR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH JURISDICTION FOR MORE INFORMATION.